

Maturation

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Winter: icy, bitter, unforgiving.
Yet, the only thing colder than the wind were the biting words of my mother.
 “Your best is not enough; you need to *be* the best.”
I had to trudge through the snow on my own,
Unlike my peers, I had no footprints to follow.

The sky wept with me in the Spring.
It mourned my childhood passions and dreams.
Finding comfort in the droplets on my cheeks,
Finding asylum under the dense clouds.
I assimilated my family’s hopes as my own and ignored the brewing storm inside.
I began to resent rainbows,
For they were intangible and temporary.

Rainstorms reminded me of Winter misery,
An unshakable chill between my bones.
But with the tender kisses of springtide,
The world begins to thaw,
And I begin to flourish.

Summer: short and sweet.
Year after year, it greets me in a warm embrace,
Accepting me,
Giving me the praise that I’ve yearned for.
 “*I am proud of you*”
A flower that grew through the cracks of the pavement.
Delicate on the surface, but with strong supporting roots underneath.
Flourishing despite the circumstances,
Nurtured to accept nothing less than fruition.

Every year, I welcome the crisp air of Autumn.
Another cycle approaches completion:
Blossoms turn into seeds,
Farmers harvest their crops,
And I take out my red mittens.

I share a meal with those I love, prepared from this year’s bounty,

Stomach full of food, heart full of gratitude.
A wonderful life given to me,
Built by the sacrifices of my parents.
Stoic as evergreens.
Bittersweet as cider.
Offering frigid words but loving actions.

If I listen carefully, I can hear each leaf fall softly to the ground.
Each one whispering words of reassurance.
Afterall,
By sacrificing its leaves, a tree survives through the winter.
Waiting to sow its seeds,
Waiting for its chance to bask in the sunlight once more,
Waiting to reach maturation.

“Thank you, Mom and Dad.”